World Teachers’ Day 2021

Unlocking Teachers’ Innovation to Drive Educational Recovery

Roundtable Discussion – Concept note

7 October 2021, 12.00 – 13.30 (Paris, CET)

Registration: https://unesco-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJMkceqvrz0sHtCIUJQai91IVflfIRxDtS9m

Background

As an engine of improvement in education, innovation is a critical factor for education to be inclusive, equitable and of good quality; it thus needs to be at the heart of education policies and policy-making. Education in 2020 was, in many ways, defined by innovation. As schools closed across country after country, teachers, education systems and the global education community innovated to ensure that learning continued. From bottom-up teacher- and community-led initiatives to more top-down responses from education stakeholders, the school closures accelerated some changes that were already under way whilst also spurring new areas of growth. Around the world, teachers responded to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic with flexibility and professionalism.

The pandemic has accentuated learning disruptions worldwide, especially for the most vulnerable. To support the recovery, it is crucial that all teachers and learners benefit from these innovations and that no one is left behind. However, in order to be able to bring innovative pedagogies and practices into classrooms, teachers need an environment that values the autonomy and leadership necessary to seize opportunities to depart from established practice.

World Teachers Day is an annual, global celebration, instituted by UNESCO, ILO and other partner organizations on 5 October 1994 to commemorate the anniversary of the adoption of the 1966 ILO/UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Teachers¹ and the adoption, in 1997, of the UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher Education Teaching Personnel². The day provides the occasion to celebrate the teaching profession worldwide, take stock of achievements, and draw attention to the voices of teachers, who are at the heart of efforts to attain the global education target of leaving no one behind.

Objectives

This international webinar will focus on the avenues of cooperation and dialogue that can help to harness, develop and scale up the new pedagogical practices that have emerged in order to tackle learning gaps during COVID-19. Furthermore, the webinar will examine how to create environments and public policies that are favorable to innovation in teaching and learning to ensure that education systems expand collective capabilities for innovation. It will also discuss the complexities of the post-COVID era in schools and identify how to ensure teachers’ and their capacity to innovate can drive this period of recovery.

The event will showcase innovations in teaching and learning fostered by individuals and organizations. This will include projects from the UNESCO-Hamdan Prize for Teacher Development which celebrates innovative capacity to support teachers. It will also highlight some of the main findings and powerful examples from the open crowdsourcing of teachers’ insights and innovations during the pandemic, which was led by the OECD, UNESCO and the Teacher Task Force in early 2021 through the OECD’s Global Teaching InSights platform. It will aim to also examine the environments and policies necessary to ensure that these innovative practices continue even after in-person schooling resumes.

The discussion will also provide key inputs for the 2021 Policy Dialogue Forum which will focus on the innovative solutions developed by and for teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The over-arching theme is ‘Innovation in teacher policy and practice for educational recovery’ with particular attention to: i) innovation in teaching and learning, (ii) initial and in-service teacher education and (iii) education policy.

Featured speakers

International experts

- **Borhene Chakroun**, Director, Division of Policies and Lifelong Learning, UNESCO
- **Ms Yuri Belfali**, Head of Division, Early Childhood and Schools, Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development and **Ms Anna Pons**, Project Lead of the Global Teacher InSights campaign, OECD

Laureates from the UNESCO-Hamdan Prize

- **Debbie Psychoyos**, Founder and CEO, ProEd Foundation
- **Susan Place Everhart**, CEO, Sabre Education

Teacher innovators

- **Henry De Leon, Panama**, from the ProEd Foundation
- **Filipa Matos, Portugal**, Global Teaching Insights campaign

The webinar will be moderated by **Carlos Vargas Tamez**, UNESCO Chief of Section for Teacher Development and Head of Secretariat, International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030

About the Partners

The UNESCO-Hamdan Prize for Teacher Development

The UNESCO-Hamdan Prize for Teacher Development was created in 2008 to support the improvement of teaching and learning quality in achieving the Sustainable Development Goal 4 on Quality Education, which is one of UNESCO’s priorities.
The Prize encourages and benefits projects that make an outstanding contribution to improving teacher development and performance. It also facilitates their global sharing and dissemination.

Awarded every two years, the Prize is supported by the Hamdan bin Rashid Al Maktoum Foundation for Distinguished Academic Performance. Since its inception, it has recognized 17 exemplary practices from all regions of the world.

Additional information is available on the UNESCO-Hamdan Prize webpage at: https://en.unesco.org/themes/teachers/hamdan-prize

OECD – Global Teaching InSights

OECD is an international organisation that works to build better policies for better lives. In late 2020 and early 2021, the OECD, UNESCO and the International Task Force on Teacher for Education 2030 asked teachers, teacher educators and school leaders to submit videos documenting their innovative responses to the pandemic. This crowdsourcing was conducted through the OECD’s Global Teaching InSights platform which aims to make teaching more visible and to promote a rich global conversation on teaching. Teachers shared insights on how they had kept learning going, supported students through social-emotional practice, and how they had collaborated with their peers. The campaign sought to inspire teachers facing similar challenges, to shape efforts to build stronger instruction, and to recognize teachers’ dedication to the profession. The crowdsourcing was supported by a series of virtual Conversations on Teaching which showcased the work of teachers and promoted international exchange around innovation and lessons learned.

The International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030 (TTF)

In the spirit of the Education 2030 Agenda, the International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030 contributes to increasing the number of teachers and the quality of teaching globally through appropriate policies. It adheres to the international community’s pledge to “…ensure that teachers and educators are empowered, adequately recruited, well-trained, professionally qualified, motivated and supported within well-resourced, efficient and effectively governed systems.” The Teacher Task Force pursues this mission through the three strategic areas of its work (advocacy, knowledge creation and sharing, country support and engagement).